

## **Information Paper: 2019 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey DoD Results**

### **Purpose:**

To provide background information on the Department of Defense (DoD) 2019 Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) results.

### **Background:**

- The FEVS is a government-wide survey conducted annually by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) and has high-visibility with OPM, the Office of Management and Budget, and Congress. It also informs the Partnership for Public Service's "Best Places to Work in the Federal Government" rankings that are published each year in December.
- The FEVS focuses on employee perceptions regarding how effectively federal agencies manage their workforces. Since 2011, employee ratings remain consistently positive job satisfaction, commitment, engagement, and how each contributes to the accomplishment of agency missions. Challenges do persist with issues such as equity of performance management, resources, and promotion opportunity.
- Results are used to: develop program metrics (e.g., employee engagement); measure factors that influence recruitment, outreach, and retention; help the agency meet its mission; inform action plans organizational change; and meet the OPM's 5 CFR 250 requirement to post annual FEVS/Annual Employee Survey (AES) results on agency websites.

### **Key Points:**

- The FEVS19 was administered by OPM from May 13th through July 5th, 2019 to all eligible (full/part-time, permanent, non-seasonal, non-political) Federal employees in participating agencies. Of the 1,443,152 Federal employees surveyed, 603,075 (41.8%) were DoD employees. FEVS19 was a census versus random sample; the last census was in 2018.
  - Of the 603,075 DoD employees surveyed, 199,723 (33.1%) responded to the survey. This rate represents an increase of 3% over 2018 DoD response (30%). The 2019 Government response rate is 42.6%, 2% higher than the 2018 Government response rate of 40.6%, and 9.5% higher than the 2019 DoD response rate.
- The DoD 2019 key index results exhibited a positive increase from 2018:
  - Employee Engagement Index (EE) is 70%, one percent higher than the 2018 EE of 69%.
    - The lowest engagement subscale continues to be Leaders Lead (60%) compared with the subscales for Supervisors (76%) and Intrinsic Work Experience (73%).
  - Global Satisfaction (GS) describes satisfaction with job, organization, and pay, as well as whether the organization would be recommended as a good place to work, is 66% for 2019, a one percent point increase from 2018.
  - The New Inclusion Quotient (New IQ) is 63%, up one percent from 2018.
    - The lowest New IQ subscale continues to be Fairness (50%) compared with a range of 61% to 79% for the other New IQ subscales.
- FEVS19 included eight DoD-specific Additional Survey Items:
  - Support for professional development was broken into three hierarchal leadership levels - reported level of support decreased as leadership level increased:

- Three-quarters (76%) of respondents indicated that their immediate supervisor supports their professional development.
    - Sixty two percent reported their second level supervisor promotes their professional development.
    - Forty-eight percent reported their senior leaders (GS15/SES) promote their professional development.
  - In the questions related to specific mentoring within DoD:
    - Just over one quarter (27.3%) indicated that they have a mentor within DoD they go to for career advice.
    - Six percent (6%) indicated they have talked to a DoD career coach during the past 12 months.
  - In line with the new DoD performance initiative, questions were included on performance discussion frequency and Individual Development Plan (IDP) creation:
    - Almost half of respondents (48.8%) reported their supervisor has talked with them about their performance plan three or more times during the past 12 months.
    - Fifty-nine percent indicated they have a signed IDP that reflects their interests and career goals.
  - In 2019, a question was included on performance discussions with supervisor:
    - Three-quarters (76.9%) of respondents indicated that they feel comfortable initiating performance discussions with their supervisor.
- There were 39 survey items identified as Strengths, having a response of 65% positive or higher. There were two items identified as Challenges, having a negative response of 35% or higher.
  - The 35 Strengths included topics such as employees being held accountable for results; supervisors treating them with respect, supporting work/life, and listening to them; knowing what is expected on the job; and employees sharing information and job knowledge with each other. The 2019 FEVS responses indicate the following five highest positive ratings consistent with 2018:
    - (96%) When needed I am willing to put in the extra effort to get a job done.
    - (92%) I am constantly looking for ways to do my job better.
    - (90%) The work I do is important.
    - (86%) I know how my work relates to the agency's goals.
    - (84%) My organization has prepared employees for potential security threats.
  - Consistent with prior years, the Challenges focus on performance, resources, and career opportunity. The 2019 FEVS responses indicate the following five highest negative ratings (three of them are "Challenges," greater than 35% negative response).
    - (41%) Pay raises depend on how well employees perform their jobs.
    - (38%) In my work unit, steps are taken to deal with a poor performer who cannot or will not improve.
    - (33%) I have sufficient resources to get my job done.
    - (32%) I believe the results of this survey will be used to make my agency a better place to work.
    - (32%) Promotions in my work unit are based on merit.

- There was a decrease of 6% (32% compared to 38% I 2018) of respondents reported they believe the results of the survey will be used to make their agency a better place to work.
- The number of respondents reporting they plan to stay in their organization remained constant in 2019 at 61.8% (2018 was 61.5%).
- Since 2015 there has been virtually no change in the number of respondents planning to retire (6%).
  - Over half (55%) of respondents indicated they are over 50 years of age.
  - Sixteen percent reported they are 60 years of age or older.
- Just over half (50.4%) of respondents indicated they are either retired, separated, or discharged from the military, or currently in the National Guard or Reserves.
- Part 250.303 (a) of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, requires agencies to post their survey results and a high level analysis of the results on websites no later than 120 days after the survey closes.

### **Note on Confidentiality**

The protection of the identity of individual employees and the confidentiality of their responses are our highest priorities. Survey participation is voluntary and all responses are confidential and anonymous. When OPM delivers the survey results, no information is provided to tie responses to individual employees.

### **Recommendation:**

- None; for information only.

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